

ASA
Ew

Mrs Zimmerman

The COMPASS

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS



August 1940

SOCIAL WORK AND NATIONAL DEFENSE

VALUES AND LIMITATIONS OF THE EVALUATION PROCESS

As Seen by the Worker: *Martha Perry*

As Seen by the Supervisor: *Frances Schmidt*

REPORT ON 1940 ELECTIONS

Volume XXI

Number 11

Editorial

Social workers everywhere, like other Americans, are caught in the movement of world events and disturbed by the problems of America's present and future course amidst these events. While no one can safely assume the role of prophet, certain trends are evident. Among these are unprecedented expenditures for defense, increasing centralization of governmental authority and a greater regimentation of civilian life. Social work must reckon with the material and psychological environment that is created by a "war economy."

The democratic philosophy has provided a peculiarly favorable setting for social work. Dangers to the democratic thesis threaten not merely the external structure but the inmost essence of professional social work. At the same time social workers would be seriously disabled for the task before them if they failed to see that current dangers differ from the old in degree rather than in kind. Problems of concentration of power, of exploitation of the individual, of inequality of opportunity, and of insecurity have been inherent in the development of the economic system of free enterprise, they have even been defended as inevitable and necessary in the "democratic process." The forms they may now take might appear to be alarmingly new; the problems themselves are old.

Under circumstance of manifold and unpredictable change we have been taught by past experience that the need for social workers and for social services will be more and not less urgent. The article on the opposite page indicates some of the activities in which social workers are already engaged and suggests some of the problems in which social work knowledge and experience may be required. Fortunately we have grappled long enough with the problem of identifying the peculiar concerns and contributions of social work in rapidly shifting situations neither to under-estimate its difficulty nor its importance. Nor will the central task of this Association be quite unfamiliar,—to assist its members to forge from their common knowledge and experience the tools most appropriate to new demands and to analyze those demands so that they may be met with sound adaptations rather than with compromises which unwittingly weaken or betray the integrity of social work.

Contents

Article	Page
Social Work and National Defense.....	3
Values and Limitations of the Evaluation Process:	
As seen by the Worker— MARTHA PERRY	5
As Seen by the Supervisor— FRANCES SCHMIDT	8
Confidentiality of Case Records.....	13
Red Cross Inquiry Service.....	14
The Problem of Credit for Field Work in Case Work Practice.....	15
ANNE F. FENLASON and RUTH B. HAUGEN	
Regional Conferences	17
Report on 1940 Elections.....	18
National Inquiry in St. Louis.....	18

THE COMPASS

Published monthly except September by
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS
Publication office 374 Broadway, Albany, N. Y.
Editorial and General office 130 East 22nd St.,
New York, N. Y.

VOLUME XXI

NUMBER 11

Officers

Harry Greenstein, <i>Pres.</i>	Pierce Atwater, <i>3rd V-Pres.</i>
Grace L. Coyle, <i>1st V-Pres.</i>	Frederick I. Daniels, <i>Treas.</i>
Charlotte Carr, <i>2nd V-Pres.</i>	Savilla Millis Simons, <i>Sec.</i>
Walter West.....	<i>Executive Secretary</i>

Assistant Secretaries: Dorothy C. Kahn, Grace F. Marcus,
Elisabeth Mills

THE COMPASS: Edited by the Staff

Entry as second-class matter at the post office at
Albany, N. Y.

Acceptance for mailing at the special rate of postage provided for in Section 1103, Act of October 3, 1917,
authorized June 28, 1924

Subscription: Non-Members \$1.00 per annum. Subscription of members of the Association included in annual dues.

Social Work and National Defense

Social workers are particularly sensitive to the impact of events which may undermine the democratic ideals that have given social work its charter and direction. They are disturbed by many questions: What effects will the swift rush of events have on social work? What evidence is there now of the shape developments are taking? What should social workers be doing? How can we prepare for the part which social workers should play?

The staff has been aware of the importance of finding answers to these questions as soon as answers are discoverable. It is not possible to provide information about all the plans and activities in which the Federal government is engaged that bear on the particular concerns of social workers but it may be worth noting certain developments as of the date this issue goes to press that have a special interest to us. Of paramount importance is the assignment of health and welfare, in relation to national defense, to Harriet Elliott, Consumer Advisor of the National Defense Council. In addition, an advisory group has been appointed to assist in the coordination of these activities on the part of federal agencies. The members of this group are: Surgeon-General Thomas Parran, Katharine Lenroot, Chief, United States Children's Bureau, Arthur Altmeyer, Chairman Social Security Board, and M. L. Wilson, Director of Extension Service, Department of Agriculture. An executive secretary for this field began work on July 29. She is Gay B. Shepperson, a member of the Association since 1922, and formerly State Relief Director of Georgia. On August 1 and 2 Commissioner Elliott called a conference of leading national organizations to discuss plans of establishing cooperative relationships. The Association was represented at this conference. Frank Bane, formerly Director of the Social Security Board and now Director of the Council of State Governments, is in Washington for a month on a general assignment for the Defense Council to work out plans for state and local organizations.

Members of the staff recently conferred with Mrs. Roosevelt on the conservation of social service programs in connection with defense plans. The staff is in close touch with the Bureau of Employment Security, where responsibility lies for recruitment and placement of industrial workers; the Bureau of Public Assistance; United States Children's Bureau; United States Committee for the Care of European Children; W.P.A.; N.Y.A.; Ameri-

can Red Cross; the Department of Justice; the United States Civil Service Commission; and numerous other official and voluntary groups. To all of these suggestions have been made concerning the use of social work personnel and the maintenance of social work standards in the present emergency.

The staff has been seeking every opportunity in its contacts to keep oriented to the problems confronting members. To attempt to anticipate the course of the defense program and events that might affect it is impossible. Our common professional task, however, is, as always, to determine the practical relation of social work to each problem as it is identified. The following are some preliminary questions and suggestions that have emerged at this time from the inquiries and discussions which the staff has initiated. They may be useful as tentative leads to be followed for chapter discussion and action.

Problems in the Relation of Social Work to National Defense. The Need for Social Work Services for Defense

1. How can we utilize the experience and the gains of social work during recent years to establish more effectively the thesis that this nation cannot afford to neglect its social services as essentials to defense?

2. Do we need a basic statement for social welfare programs that will furnish a common base for interpretation of their social purposes and the relation of the needs they meet to the fundamental needs of a defense program?

3. In providing additional services what bearing have differences between the resources of social work today and the resources of social work during the last war? (For example, how does the assumption by federal and state governments of responsibility for important social welfare functions affect possibilities in the present situation? What difference has been created by the use of social work personnel in the administration and operation of federal and state social services?)

The Need for Recognizing the Continued Existence of Unemployment

It will be necessary to combat tendencies to:

1. Assume that unemployment will become negligible or cease as soon as workers are mobilized for industrial defense.

2. Overlook the wide differences in different parts of the country in the availability of skill and man power needed for given defense industries.

3. Neglect the dislocation in employment in various industries.

4. Assume that the willingness to work needs to be strengthened by curtailment of funds for the relief of the unemployed.

The Need for Clarifying Principles of Organization

Present facilities should be reviewed to see whether established provisions can meet new needs and careful discriminations should be used to see that proposed adaptations of agency programs do not involve losses in essential effectiveness.

There is need for fixing responsibility for new services when these can be incorporated appropriately in existing facilities. When new organizations or services are necessary, they should be harmonized with those already established.

The Need for Maintaining Standards of Service

Evidence should be collected showing the damage which results from reductions of standards and curtailments of funds when these are made in advance of demonstrated needs for such changes.

Careful track should be kept of the possible effect on public services of variation in function, sharp contractions or expansions in loads.

Attention should be given to the effects on voluntary services of diversions of funds to refugee services and changes in plans for community financing, and also to the advisability of eliminating obsolete or obsolescent programs or agencies.

The AASW Platform on Public Social Services should be constantly reexamined for its current validity.

Relevant data should be sought on the effects of reductions in labor standards and wages.

The Need for Maintaining Standards of Personnel

New functions and services should be analyzed to discover where personnel with social work knowledge and skill are needed.

Principles of selection of personnel need to be formulated in order to realize a sound distribution of available personnel with a view to

1. providing competent personnel to direct and operate new services and to avoid "dumping" of obsolete or mediocre personnel
2. maintaining basic efficiency of essential existing services
3. protecting schools of social work from serious faculty losses and students from interrupting attendance at professional schools in order to fill jobs.

AASW Statement on Standards for Social Work Personnel (see THE COMPASS, July 1940) should be promoted.

Need of observance of standards of personnel and employment practices should be emphasized.

Plans for training and training courses should be examined in the light of older experience with training courses and of subsequent improvements in methods and facilities.

List of Possible Functions for Social Workers in Defense Program

Social work activity is necessarily auxiliary to the defense program and directed to the maintenance of peace time democratic values under the most difficult of all conditions other than those of active war. Following the thesis set forth in the editorial on page 2 this tentative list of functions can be indicated. Each item can be elaborated with a wealth of detail in national, state and local settings.

1. Assistance in defining principles of selection in drafts for industrial training or military service and plans for follow up of persons rejected in these drafts.

2. Proposals for adjustment of military and civilian pay rates so as to avoid dependency for men in service, and for use of existing insurance machinery wherever possible.

3. Assistance in movement of labor under the defense program to prevent both individual and community dislocation.

4. Assistance in housing activities incident to the defense program.

5. Assistance in promotion of plans for meeting health needs in the civilian and military population.

6. Assistance in the administration of alien registration to protect the rights of aliens and avoid possible destructive effects of this legislation.

7. Promotion of use of social work personnel in new industrial communities and in Army and Navy.

8. Assistance in changing existing or creating new services to deal with problems of morale.

9. Consultation and technical advice to official and lay groups, such as state and local Defense Councils.

Among the definite proposals which the staff of the Association has been considering as ways of helping to determine the Association's program and to develop the effective relation of social work to defense problems are:

1. Development of a project for the imme-

diate classification of personnel now occupying social work positions.

2. A special conference in the fall to define

the Association's program and provide guides for members and chapters in their work on problems such as those mentioned above.

Values and Limitations of the Evaluation Process

As Seen by the Worker

By **Martha Perry**, Executive Secretary,
New York City Chapter, AASW

LAST January the Program Committee of the Case Work Section invited three chapters of the AASW to participate in this meeting* by preparing material on the "purposes, values and limitations in the evaluation method as seen from the point of view of those with whom this method is used . . . with emphasis on how its use can be further developed in the interests of the professional development of the worker and the development of casework."

This invitation has a two-fold significance. It means that the Case Work Section is drawing on the experience of younger workers—of front-line practitioners, in fact,—on a subject which closely affects them and on which their opinions have obvious value, yet a subject on which formulations have in the past been largely the contributions of supervisors and agency executives. It means also a recognition of the professional association as a channel for developing thinking on a professional problem unhampered by agency policy or bias, and broader than experience within a single agency or even a single community. That such recognition was warranted is testified to by the enthusiastic interest of the three groups participating, the free nature of their discussions, and the breadth and variety of experience of those contributing.

Chicago, New York City, and Philadelphia are the three chapters which appointed groups to undertake this assignment. The participants—twenty-four in all—are practicing caseworkers under supervision in agencies requiring periodic written evaluations. None has had experience supervising either students or workers. The fields of family casework, child placement, public assistance, medical social work, and psychiatric social work were all represented in one or more of the groups.

Except for the Program Committee's general description of the plan for this meeting in its original letter to the chapters, there has been no central direction of the discussions of the three groups. Each group started "from scratch" to consider the purposes, values and limitations of evaluation in relation to professional development from the point of view of the caseworker whose performance is evaluated. Interchange of minutes provided for some comparison of points covered but common points were not discussed in the same order and consequently the minutes from other chapters were not always relevant at the time they were received.

The final reports submitted by each group at the end of April express the thinking and opinions of the individual caseworkers who participated, and are not AASW chapter reports. They inevitably differ in form and emphasis although the points covered and the conclusions are surprisingly similar. For these two reasons, my paper is not a stringing together of three reports in a series. It is rather a discussion of the points these twenty-four caseworkers raised, the questions and qualifications they had about evaluations as they had experienced them, the values they saw in evaluation for their own professional development, and their suggestions for increasing those values. Some additional material was voluntarily submitted by a group in the San Francisco Chapter of the AASW which had discussed evaluation from a somewhat different angle. Their material was found to agree substantially with that from the other three chapters where the same points were covered.

May I make clear at this point also, that my references to what caseworkers think about evaluations are not meant to include all caseworkers everywhere but that for purposes of discussion this sampling of caseworkers' attitudes is presented as a valid expression of the caseworker's point of view.

* This paper was delivered at a meeting of the Social Case Work Section, National Conference of Social Work, Grand Rapids, 1940.

THE student finishing casework training in a school of social work and embarking upon his first casework job is aware that a sizing up of performance is part of the training process. When he takes his first job, the beginning caseworker today expects, I am sure, to have his performance judged periodically in some formal fashion even though his ideas may be nebulous as to the values of it for him and as to how it will be done.

Experience of the chapters in selecting the personnel of these discussion groups shows that many such beginning caseworkers will find no provision in their agency for periodic written evaluations. Those who do will find great variation between agencies, even in the same field and the same community. In Chicago, in New York City and in Philadelphia the following wide varieties of actual experience with the evaluation process were noted:

- (1) Types of evaluation range from numerical ratings to detailed expositions of performance.
- (2) Frequency of evaluation varies greatly. Some agencies have a definitely established interval, semi-annual or annual, others relate periodicity to change of job, promotion, or questions about adequacy of performance. Still others leave time, frequency and to some extent, content, up to the initiative of the caseworker.
- (3) The purpose of the written evaluation also appears to differ widely between agencies. At least the caseworker's understanding of its purpose varies all the way from considering it solely as an administrative tool for making decisions on salary increases to considering it a phase of the supervision process, the primary objective of which is furthering the worker's own professional development with little or no relation to the agency's standard of performance, or decisions on salary or promotion. There may, of course, be less variation in the purposes of periodic written evaluations from the viewpoint of the agency but it is significant that caseworkers see extreme variations in purposes.
- (4) The greatest variation occurs in evaluation method. Some caseworkers are given a verbal evaluation in a supervisory conference and are told that a written statement has been filed. Others are handed an evaluation to read in final form as a *fait accompli*. Others participate both in a preliminary conference and in formulation of the final written statement.

ALL of these differences in agency practice on evaluations—in content, in frequency, in purposes as understood by the evaluated, and in method,—are significant in showing how new and experimental the process of casework evaluation is. Their special significance is that in spite of the wide range of experiences in being evaluated, the caseworkers participating in these discussions are in general agreement as to the points they consider fundamental to the kind of dynamic evaluation which would contribute most fully to individual professional development.

It is essential from the viewpoint of the person evaluated that the term "evaluation" be as clearly defined as possible and that certain of its characteristics be understood including some of the things it is *not* as well as some of the things it *is*. Inspection of performance by caseworker and supervisor is a continuing process in supervision of a worker; but supervision and evaluation although related are not synonymous. Evaluation is in a sense one aspect of supervision. To a greater degree than the continuous supervisory process, it is judgmental and authoritative because it is more specifically related to an agency's standards of performance, and because it is necessarily concerned not only with the individual worker's growth but also with the total job for which he is paid. Although evaluation is a part of supervision, it is at the same time a summation of total job performance including use of supervision.

A caseworker's definition of evaluation would be: an objective appraisal of a worker's total functioning on the job over a specified past period; an analysis of present performance; and a guide for future development.

The phrase "total functioning" provides for that important seeing of the woods as well as the trees, for a kind of perspective that is so valuable periodically when supervisory conferences are largely case discussions. It means also an appraisal of aspects of the casework job which are less concrete than the worker's handling of a specific problem in the Jones case—concepts of agency functioning and subtle attitudes toward clients which repeat themselves from case to case and need to be seen as a thread definitely related to the worker's professional development.

The qualifying phrase "on the job" indicates a strong conviction that personality traits are not a factor for evaluation except as personality affects job execution. This does not mean that personality is not an important part of a caseworker's equipment, but it puts that quality into an objective relation

to job performance by limiting its consideration in evaluation to professional use of personality.

"Over a specified past period" are also important words in their limitation of the period under consideration to encompass a discussable span of time, and neither to start over at the beginning of the worker's experience nor to project indefinitely into the future and thus indicate a static picture of the worker's capacity for growth.

Each of the three groups participating in these discussions spent some time on the content of evaluation because a consideration of the qualities to be evaluated are a necessary preliminary to a consideration of how that evaluation is carried out. In reference to content per se the important points to note from the worker's point of view are: first, that content shall really cover job performance in toto and second, that qualities unrelated to job performance, such as personality isolated from its effect on the job, shall not be part of the evaluation.

IN discussions of values for the worker in a periodic written evaluation, it is inevitable and desirable that negative feelings about evaluations will come to the top. For these negative attitudes, wanting a better word, I shall use the ambiguous term limitations. They seem to be of two kinds. There are those limitations which are, from the caseworker's viewpoint, inherent in the evaluation process itself. Then there are those which seem to the caseworker to be a direct result of the way the evaluation is handled by the agency or the supervisor.

The inherent limitations warrant only cursory mention because they are fairly self-evident. The unknown always creates a certain amount of insecurity until the experience is repeated to the point of becoming familiar. Evaluations for every caseworker are at first a new experience and will initially cause some insecurity. Any learning process which involves facing one's failures or inadequacies carries with it a certain amount of inner discomfort. This may decrease with the worker's increased security but will probably be present whenever evaluation is a developmental process. The presence of some discomfort has definitely constructive aspects and it need not be a deterrent if the attitude of the supervisor is not punitive nor that of the worker defensive. There is also a limitation inherent in the supervisor-worker relationship. No matter how much confidence the worker has in his supervisor, the supervisor's position of responsibility to the agency will inevitably

inject a limitation into the evaluation process.

From the worker's point of view the second kind of limitation is not inherent in the evaluation process per se but rather stems directly from the way evaluation is handled, as to content, method or both. These limitations can therefore be considered remediable, and as such warrant special attention. The caseworker sees them as gaps or inadequacies in the evaluation process as he has experienced it, which prevent evaluation from being the kind of dynamic developmental experience which he believes it can potentially be.

I shall discuss these limitations in relation to what the caseworker sees as desirable evaluation practices and methods pointing out the negative reactions that may occur when they are found to be insufficient or lacking.

A sense of insecurity is recognized by the caseworker as a basic factor in the limitations of evaluations as he sees them. He places feelings of security, therefore, first among the values to him in written evaluations, recognizing not only their importance in his own professional development but also their direct relation to quality of casework service rendered: insecurity in a worker cannot but be reflected in client relationships.

An established policy of written evaluations adds to a worker's sense of security in his job from several angles. It gives him a more definite idea of where he stands with the agency than he will probably get from regular supervisory conferences which are not so focussed. It gives him an opportunity to take stock of his total performance in the light of a perspective which reaches beyond individual cases. It gives him a sense of direction in relation to his strengths and weaknesses. It also gives him a feeling of confidence in the objectivity of the judgments that must necessarily be made from time to time about his performance.

Is it necessary that evaluations shall be written in order to have those values for the worker? Undoubtedly there are caseworkers who have gained all of these through an oral evaluation, some probably through regular supervision without even an evaluation conference as such. From the caseworker's viewpoint, however, the exceptions do not make the rule. The conference or conferences where the evaluation is discussed may be of immeasurable value to him in thinking through his attitudes and in understanding his capacities. In fact, they often are the most important aspect of evaluation in terms of

(Continued on page 19)

Values and Limitations of the Evaluation Process

As Seen by the Supervisor

By Frances Schmidt, Brooklyn Bureau of Charities, Brooklyn, N. Y.

EVALUATIONS of case workers' performance have been made for as long as social agencies have existed.* Those early evaluation at all, there must be the basic assumption example, one of the most thought-provoking tions, or judgments, were an end in themselves, and served primarily the purpose of providing a basis for references, promotions or dismissals, and salary increases. The worker had no part in these and often they were made without her knowledge. It was only after supervision was defined as a process by such leaders as Virginia Robinson and Grace Marcus that the inherent values of evaluation as a dynamic factor in supervision were recognized.

Since how we supervise depends on how we practice case work, it follows that supervision has gone through the same developmental history as has case work itself. In an earlier period of case work, we felt that the client's problem could only be solved if he followed our advice and direction. The worker was expected to conform in the same way to the counsel of the supervisor. At this time both supervisor and case worker used the power implicit in their jobs, some because of real over-confidence, and others as a way of compensating for their feelings of confusion and inadequacy. Supervision in this period was an authoritative process.

In this kind of supervision an evaluation could only have been made in terms of the extent to which the worker did, or did not, conform to the supervisor's methods. This, in itself, tended to arouse more hostility in the worker, and guilt in the supervisor, than either could bear.

Later, we recognized the futility of this way of working and, as we acquired increasing knowledge of allied fields, we began inquiring into the total personality of the client in an effort to understand his present

attitudes. It was our honest belief that we could not only understand the total person, but that we could, and should, treat his problem in its entirety. The supervisory process was necessarily geared into this philosophy with the result that the supervisor attempted to accept the responsibility of handling the attitudes and feelings of the case worker as they were aroused and affected by this complex treatment process. Supervision at this time seems to have been primarily a therapeutic process.

During this period in case work, the supervisor could only have evaluated the performance of the case worker insofar as it revealed her capacity to understand and alter her own total personality, since that was the focus of the supervisory relationship. This kind of evaluation must also have provoked many uncomfortable feelings in both supervisor and case worker since the basis of the evaluation was actually the case worker herself and not her performance.

The next phase—and this is not to imply that it is the ultimate one—is that on which we are working at present. We feel now that our contribution to the client lies in helping him to handle that part of his present reality which he is bringing to us, as constructively as he can in the light of his previous experiences. If this is valid, the responsibility of the supervisor at this time lies in helping the case worker to understand as much of the client's personality as she can, to accept the full implication of the relationship with him, and at the same time to be aware of the purposes of the agency and the limitations within which she must operate.

Supervision in social case work is clearly and definitely a *teaching* process—the goal of which is to permit the individual worker to develop her professional understanding and skills to the limits of her capacity. The element that is peculiar to the learning process in case work, and which distinguishes it from other professions, is the degree to which the

* This paper was delivered at a meeting of the Social Case Work Section, National Conference of Social Work, Grand Rapids, 1940.

case worker's own feelings and attitudes are engaged. The distinguishing characteristic of the teaching process in case work is the fact that the supervisor must help the worker to be responsible for understanding and handling her attitudes as they relate to the job which she is learning.

When we consider supervision in this light, the evaluation becomes a form of educational measurement which offers to all of those who have a stake in the development of the worker, a tangible method of measuring her progress, and one which, therefore, has a direct effect on the quality of service rendered to the client.

However, even in a supervisory relationship which is more clearly defined and which is based more specifically on job content, we can see that the process of evaluation is a difficult one, and has certain limitations. There are, perhaps, always some elements of discomfort on the part of both the case worker and the supervisor during a conference planned for this purpose. The assumption of this much authority on the part of the supervisor may create, in her, feelings of anxiety and, in turn, may produce anxiety and hostility in the worker. For the supervisor, these feelings can be reduced when her evaluation has been based on a thoughtful study of the total case load of the case worker, and when she is secure in her resulting analysis; and for the case worker, when she has a real concept of herself as a professional person and sees the evaluation process itself as a normal and desirable part of her learning experience.

The charge of subjectivity is one that has been hurled at all of us, supervisors and workers, many times in the past—and many times with justification. I think we must admit to ourselves that the element of subjectivity will always enter into the case work job, because one cannot rule it out where human personalities are the prime ingredient, so to speak. Any worker has a right to demand that the supervisor be as objective as possible and it is with this in mind that I feel that a clearly defined evaluation outline is valuable in that it reduces subjectivity to a minimum. However, it is as impossible for the worker to demand complete objectivity of the supervisor, as it is for the supervisor to demand complete objectivity of the case worker in her recordings of her interviews, her presentations of her work, etc. To my way of thinking if there is to be a working relationship at all, there must be the basis assumption that these two people, worker and supervisor,

are mutually responsible individuals who are discharging their professional and ethical responsibilities to the best of their abilities.

We know that, in spite of the intangibles involved in case work, it has a specific content. We cannot measure success or failure in the case work job by the volume of production, but we do know that some workers progress more rapidly than others, some fail to render a constructive service to the client, some seem able to function in one area and not in others. Every supervisor is aware of these differences in workers, but she must wonder how she knows these things—what scale she is using to judge by—whether another supervisor would see the same case worker in the same way. Conscientious though she may be, she can only continue to make these judgments to the best of her ability, in the light of her growing experience with a number of case workers.

She must wish for some safe measure against which she can test her judgment of each case worker, and by the use of which she can, to some extent, lessen the anxiety and guilt which inevitably surrounds the making of any judgment. When, as a basis for evaluation we provide some such kind of measurement, based on actual job content, this serves several purposes.

First, it provides the case worker with a definition of her job, and clarifies for her the total scope of her responsibilities. It permits her to see herself not only in terms of her own individual development, but it provides her with a picture of her progress as it relates to a well established norm. That is, she knows that she is being measured not only in relation to other case workers whom her supervisor has taught, the number of whom may be limited or extensive, typical or atypical, but in relation to the standards which the agency has established for all workers in her range of experience. There is not only a security, but a stimulation, about this kind of measurement which is essential to the growth of any case worker. Aside from the benefits which she may derive from this knowledge in terms of using it for her professional growth, there is also the awareness of the degree to which she is meeting the terms of the implicitly understood contractual agreement which she made with her employer at the time of hiring.

Secondly, the evaluation guide permits the supervisor to make a judgment based not only on her own experience but on a standard of performance existing in the agency. She has a responsibility to the agency to provide the case workers whom she is supervising with

the best that she can give them. She can only be sure that she is giving this best if she has some way of measuring the results of her supervision in relation not only to her own district or her own case workers but to the work of the agency as a whole. In other words, she has a professional responsibility which she can discharge only insofar as she evaluates her own supervisory job in terms of the development of those case workers whose training is entrusted to her.

Third, it has value to the agency since it is only as the agency knows the quality of its work performance that it can meet its obligations to the clients coming to it. The agency can measure this only as the supervisor meets her responsibility for training and evaluating. In addition, the agency has a responsibility to the community which it is serving, and which is supporting it, to offer that community the best type of case work service which it can give.

There are then these different agents, each of whom has a stake in the performance of the case worker and each of whom has a right to know whether or not her performance is up to the standard. This brings us to the pertinent question of what constitutes a standard. We talk a great deal in case work about this case worker's warmth, that case worker's ability to accept hostility, another case worker's skill in handling relief, but we have been very shy about setting down any criteria for what constitutes success or failure in the case work job.

With some of these questions in mind, the Brooklyn Bureau of Charities embarked this year on an effort to establish an objective norm, which could be used within our own agency as a base for evaluating satisfactory performance. It appeared to us in reviewing previous evaluation outlines that our tendency had been to evaluate the personality of the case worker rather than the job she was doing. There have been, for instance, such criteria as "her capacity to be non-judgmental, the way in which she relates herself to people, her sense of humor, etc." We thought that for an evaluation outline to have validity in terms of supervision as I have defined it in this paper, it must be done on the basis of job performance rather than interpretation of an individual personality.

We recognized that any standard of performance must change as the case worker develops in experience, for the same criteria which we would establish for her at the end of her first year of case work would not be applicable to the case worker who had had,

for example, three years of practice. We recognized, too, that any evaluation guide would have to be constantly revised in order that it would continue to reflect actual agency practice. Our purpose was to reduce general content to its simplest and most specific form in order that it might have the same significance to all who used it.

A committee of executives and supervisors began to work on the subject last fall and has been meeting regularly throughout the year. We limited the committee in this way as we thought that this group had primary responsibility for defining the content of the case work job.

As a base to start with, we undertook to outline the skills which we felt the worker should have developed at the end of her first year of experience. Those first discussions were pretty theoretical and showed clearly the manner in which the experience of the individual supervisor necessarily colored her thinking on the subject. After having arrived at a tentative outline which was fairly satisfactory to those on the committee, we undertook to read record material submitted by case workers at that level of experience, in order that we might have a way of checking our theories with factual data.

The results of that process were revealing. We found in some instances that we had been expecting too much, that our thinking had been colored by the fact that we were also supervising more experienced workers or perhaps that our agency had not yet developed the kind of standards which we had been hoping for. We found that in considering the content of the records as our norm our outline in many ways needed revision. In other instances, it was out of focus in the opposite direction, that is, that our actual practice was proving first year workers to have developed certain skills which we had not expected of them but which they were apparently able to maintain.

By revising the original outline in the light of this record material, we evolved a guide which seemed to us to be representative of the average performance of our present first year staff and therefore usable, at least experimentally. Before attempting to use the outline, the committee asked workers of various levels of experience, including first year workers, to meet with it, in order that we might get their reactions to, and suggestions on, the proposed outline. The suggestions of the case workers were incorporated into the final outline and the result seems at this point to be a mutually acceptable tool with which we can begin to work.

In order to illustrate the kind of consideration which we attempted to give to the subject, it might be interesting here to trace through the evaluation of one point in the evaluation outline, as it developed in our discussion, and when subjected to the best of record material.

The first point in the original outline was "to have some awareness of the psychological make-up of the clients with whom she is dealing." In considering this further, we felt that it was too vague as well as badly phrased. The second effort to define what we meant was "an awareness of as much of the total personality of the client as possible." That was perhaps getting closer, but the phrase, "total personality" seemed to imply a kind of complete diagnostic picture which would not be possible for the case worker with only one year of experience and implied also an assumption of responsibility which no case worker would undertake. The third definition was simplified to "an awareness of what sort of person the client is." The reading of record material indicated that this degree of understanding was not revealed by the beginning case worker in her first interview with the client, although it did develop after several contacts with him. The final statement which emerged was "to know, in a continuing contact, what sort of person the client is."

This same kind of consideration was necessary for each point in the outline and, although it was a time consuming process, we knew that the importance of the job justified such an expenditure. Those of us who were on the committee feel that it has meant a great deal to us professionally to have been forced to subject our somewhat nebulous thinking on the subject to careful scrutiny.

Although the outline as it stands can be used for the present we see it as an experimental tool which should be subject to constant revision if it is to remain representative of the average performance within our agency. This same procedure has been followed to develop an evaluation guide for the workers of three years of professional experience, as we felt that growth was not definite enough to justify a complete outline for each year. The second year worker must necessarily be something of a step-child and fall in between the other two levels. We are planning to develop outlines in the future for the more experienced case workers and supervisors, as well as for the clerical staff.

I do not wish to seem to overlook the fact that evaluation is a constant part of supervision, in that in all supervisory conferences

there is probably some measurement of progress. We must remember, too, that evaluation is only one aspect of supervision, and that the supervisory relationship cannot rest on this alone. It can, however, have real value to both case worker and supervisor in defining and focusing that relationship so that it may be a more effective tool in the development of both.

A joint "checking of the record", so to speak, such as occurs in the evaluation process, provides both case worker and supervisor with a kind of bird's eye view of trends in the case worker's development, based on the study of the whole job. No matter how close the supervisory contact is, blind spots are bound to develop in both and such a recapitulation would seem to provide each with a different perspective in which strengths and weaknesses can take their proper place in relation to the whole.

The evaluation has another advantage in that it serves the double purpose of intensifying the worker's recognition of the professional responsibility involved in the job which she has undertaken and at the same time offering her the reassurance that she does not bear that responsibility alone. We recognize the importance of having the young case worker fully cognizant of all of the implications of her job, both to the client and the community. We also know that such recognition can be completely overwhelming and too much for one person to bear without anxiety but that one can be helped to accept it, and to handle it, if it can be shared with a supervisor during the learning period. The evaluation conference is a tacit admission of this sharing process which should be very reassuring to the worker as well as stimulating to the supervisor, in that it clearly defines the limits of the responsibility of each.

The formal evaluation conference, prepared for and participated in by both case worker and supervisor, has a value in that it re-defines the supervisory relationship, putting it on a clearly professional base. We are all familiar with the easy informality of district offices in which, throughout the year, the case worker and supervisor develop a friendly relationship which is in addition to their professional one. In most instances, this is desirable and pleasant but it is often a burden for the case worker who must adjust herself to the fact that in one individual she must reconcile the positive feelings which she has toward a friend and the negative feelings which she must frequently have toward the person who also represents authority. The evaluation confer-

ence is an opportunity of re-defining the relationship and clearing it of some of this confusion, to the advantage of both case worker and supervisor.

The evaluation process has value to the supervisor in that it helps her to clarify and define her own supervisory techniques and skills as they are related to the development of the worker. Through the study of the whole job which occurs, preceding the evaluation, and which because of pressure is usually not possible frequently throughout the year, she can determine the spots in which she has been of help to the worker as well as those in which she has not been giving the necessary assistance. The result of this is a constant re-evaluation of her own job which is essential not only to her own professional development but to the case workers she is supervising.

The supervisor can also make use of the evaluation process to understand and clarify what amounts to her own diagnostic picture of the learning patterns of the individual case worker, the points at which the latter seems to have had difficulty in progressing, as well as the shifts in the way she has used the supervisory relationship itself. An understanding and review of these trends between the case worker and supervisor helps both in re-defining not only the basis of their relationship to each other but the ways in which they can use that relationship in their future work together.

Social Workers and the Draft

In behalf of a local group who have been discussing "the place of social workers in a mobilization of the nation's resources for war," one of our members asks if the national office has given any thought to the question "whether social workers in responsible positions, otherwise eligible for call in the anticipated peace time draft, would be subject to the draft, or would be excused because of the nature of their work." In response to this we report that the staff has been exploring the possibility of a thorough study of the personnel situation in social work through which we might obtain more detailed information as to the qualifications, work histories, etc. of those who are employed in social work

It serves as a method by which the supervisor can identify her own feelings toward the case worker. We have all had, in our supervisory experience, feelings of undefined anxiety about the progress of a certain case worker. We have attempted to localize these in our regular reading of the cases presented for conferences but have not felt satisfied that we understand the real basis for our feelings—at least, they have continued and therefore, they have not been adequately identified. When we review the entire job of the case worker in preparation for the evaluation conference, we are usually able to locate the particular attitude or concept which has been reflected indirectly in individual pieces of work but which we have not been able to see clearly except in relation to the whole.

In conclusion, if the evaluation is a definite part of the supervisory process for which the case worker and the supervisor take mutual responsibility, and if it is based on an objective study of the total performance, it has value not only for both case worker and supervisor but for the agency and the profession. More important still, it provides a means for the agency to know the quality of its service and points the way for its continuing development, so that it may render the most responsible kind of case work service to its clients.

positions throughout the country. On the draft, an unofficial opinion is expressed that "it has not seemed desirable to make any general claim for exemption from peace or war time draft on a blanket basis for all social work employees. We are handicapped by lack of information of the kind noted above from attempting to set up any sort of adequate priorities. At this time it looks as though the question of selection should be a part of the responsibility of the draft itself. It would seem that the important thing for us as an Association to do is to help as much as possible in the judgments which will be made in the draft, by making as clear as we can the validity under whatever circumstances occur, of social work and social workers."

Confidentiality of Case Records

What issues of professional confidence are involved in the social agency's choice of materials for the education of the public about the objectives of its work? Social agencies have had an uphill job to safeguard their confidential records from invasion and are not yet always able to safeguard the rights of their clients to personal privacy. Sometimes publicity for money-raising is careless of its effect on the status of clients as such even when it scrupulously conceals their individual identities. Does a publicity that sacrifices the status of the social worker's client enhance the status of the social worker or the value of the social service, and is this another instance in which the ethical question when carefully examined proves to be a practical professional issue as well? These and other questions are prompted by an address on "Probation and the Press" which was made by Irving W. Halpern, chief probation officer of the Court of General Sessions of New York City and was published by the National Probation Association in the December 1939 issue of *Probation*.

Mr. Halpern believes that "through the newspapers we can tell the public some very elementary things about probation" for which "a definite forceful program of education is an urgent and immediate necessity." In this connection "it is necessary that we inform people that probation has never really had an opportunity to effectively demonstrate its value. We need to tell the public that the system contemplates no coddling of the criminal; that it is no cure-all for crime; that it can perform no miracles, and that since the human equation is a most important element in its administration, there must be a certain number of failures. It is necessary that the public be informed that the probation officer does not have the last word as to who his probationer shall be; that he is too often overloaded with so many cases that it is humanly impossible for him to give individualized social treatment, and that the probation officer is one of the most poorly paid and least appreciated among public servants. It is necessary that the public know that in some localities standards for probation officers are low, and that probation cannot be a constructive, rehabilitative device unless the workers have the necessary personality qualifications, the education and training to influence human beings and mold character."

To meet this need Mr. Halpern advocates the use of investigation and pre-sentence

reports as the media through which "probation departments have their best opportunity to develop an informed public opinion and a receptive attitude to the whole philosophy of probation. The probation system can best be sold to the general public through their interest in specific offenders. The pre-sentence report, if it adequately portrays the conditioning influences which motivated the individual toward crime, helps to educate the public as to the causes of crime. . . . Those concerned with the extension of the probation system desire that the public shall know that sentimentality, political favoritism, or other ulterior motivations play no part in the choice of those picked for probation treatment. Printed excerpts from these reports instill public confidence in the socialized concepts of the administration of justice and the careful selection of offenders picked for probation treatment."

Commenting on differences in the extent to which the law has been willing to protect the secrecy of proceedings in the children's courts as contrasted with those dealing with adult offenders, Mr. Halpern says that "the newspapers whet the interest of the public in regard to certain offenders and this interest continues after the conviction of the offender. The newspapers insist that it is their duty to continue informing the public of the true character of the offender and the extent of his criminal conduct. They contend that the pre-sentence report in cases which are of interest to the public should be available to them for this purpose." On the other hand the newspapers have recognized "that a sharp distinction exists between the information in a pre-sentence report and the information contained in the case histories of those persons who are on probation. They have accepted without question the attitude of the probation department that the case history contains considerable matter of an extremely confidential nature, and have not attempted to question the responsibility of the probation department to keep this information confidential, despite their awareness that the law gives it no such protection."

Mr. Halpern believes "that a long range plan of adequate and constructive publicity for probation cannot be made to function unless we recognize the newspaper's responsibility to disseminate news." In speaking for the use of pre-sentence investigations, he argues against an "unrestrained and haphazard practice of turning over" of these

materials to newspaper reporters but expresses the opinion that "the adoption of the convenient expedient of official aloofness and secrecy cannot help but invite and justify suspicion and criticism of the probation department's activities and of probation generally."

The frankness and fullness with which Mr. Halpern presents his particular argument makes the article provocative material for study of issues of confidentiality of case records and of the ethics of social work publicity.

Since the Family Welfare Association of America had been receiving a number of inquiries about methods in use by public welfare agencies for the protection of the confidentiality of their case records, its Department of Studies and Information canvassed public agency members for information on this subject. A summary of their replies has been made available in mimeographed form under the title, "Safeguarding the Confidential Nature of Case Records in Public Agencies" and may be secured from the F.W.A.A. for 10 cents.

Red Cross Inquiry Service

The Red Cross organization has traditionally rendered certain services in situations created by war and as a neutral organization has commanded a special access to the people behind the lines which has made it possible to obtain information about missing relatives and to give aid to prisoners of war. These operations have been carried out through the headquarters of the International Red Cross at Geneva. The American Red Cross, working through Geneva, has provided a means for communicating with relatives in Poland and as the war spread, with relatives in Finland, Norway, Holland, Belgium, France and England. Since the service was begun in September 1939, 32,000 inquiries have been received and 7,000 reports secured. Just now most of the inquiries concern missing relatives in Holland, Belgium and France.

The conditions abroad entail considerable delays in securing information since, for example, it is necessary to rely on the Red Cross organizations within the different countries. It may take as long as four months to secure a report and usually reports cannot be expected in less than two months. Despite the difficulties hampering them these organizations have been very cooperative. Reports received in Washington, D. C. are translated

and sent on to the local chapter. If they convey bad news, they are personally delivered.

Local chapters are kept informed about limitations in the service arising from war conditions. The Red Cross cannot for instance transmit money to individuals or assist in sending packages though packages may be sent to known prisoners of war through the International organization. The Red Cross is unable to help in getting passports or transportation to this country since it lacks representatives within each country who could do this. Inquiries about American citizens or near relatives are referred to the State Department instead of to Geneva. The State Department has been cooperative in obtaining information about missing Americans and also in transmitting funds to them. Relatives in Europe have been exceedingly grateful for word from America and have asked for more news than their American kin give. Their messages report the difficulties they are experiencing and the suffering they have met on account of the war.

New Educational Program at University of California

Beginning this fall the Department of Social Welfare of the University of California will offer a second year of graduate education in social work.

Since 1927 the University has offered the one year course of study leading to a certificate in social service. Until last year this program was administered by the department of economics, when it was transferred to the newly organized department of social welfare. At the same time it was announced that reorganization and expansion of the training program was under consideration.

The new program calls for retention of the one year curriculum as a unit in itself leading to a certificate in social welfare, and as the first half of the two year scheme leading to the master's degree. Students in the second year will be given an opportunity of specializing in four fields of work, social assistance, child welfare, medical social work, and corrections. After the general training of the first year program they will thus have an opportunity of specialized and advanced preparation for the more responsible and difficult positions that are available in the social welfare field.

This year's admissions will be substantially increased, with 90 students accepted for the first year program over last year's 65, and provisions made for entering 15 or 20 students in the second year program.

The Problem of Credit for Field Work in Case Work Practice

On the assumption that all professional social workers are interested in education for social work and have a responsibility for understanding its objectives, methods and problems, this article is published in THE COMPASS.¹ The authors are Anne F. Fenlason, Associate Professor, Graduate Course in Social Work, University of Minnesota, and Ruth B. Haugen, Assistant Professor, School of Social Work, University of Kentucky.

THE problem of credit for field work in case work is both a practical and an academic problem. Since education for social work has acquired graduate status it becomes an acute and even an embarrassing one. Any attempt at its solution posits the question, "What does field work represent?"

Supervised field work has three recognized aspects: (1) the application of class room theory to field practice. (2) the development through field practice of methods, skills and techniques in human relationships and in the use of the material environment for personal and social well being. (3) the development of personality acquired through a better understanding of the mechanisms of one's own and the client's behavior in interaction and through supervised interpretation.

Are these three aspects subject to grading? The answer probably is "yes," although we have not as yet worked out any uniform or reliable tests for measuring progress and achievement in field practice. Development of instruments of measurement in social work education has been slow, probably because we have only recently conceived of preparation for social work as education rather than training. Examinations on content of field visits in terms of class theory certainly can be devised. Given at intervals, these could furnish an objective basis for grading the assimilation of theory in practice. A class assignment used successfully at the graduate course in social work at the University of Minnesota was a term paper asking the student to relate the principles of case work as taught in class to his field work, his life's experiences and a novel, play or biography. If this assignment were made by the field instructor and the student asked to illustrate through his field experiences the principles of case work and other theoretical courses in social work, he would have a basis of grading

that aspect of field supervision which related to theory.

A test given by a field instructor on the material presented by the instructor in lectures on policies and procedures designed to orient the student to the agency is not only feasible but necessary as the student is the representative of the agency to the client and any part of the public he reaches in discussing any part of the client's situation. Such a test recently given by field supervisors in the training centers at the University of Minnesota showed that we erroneously take for granted accurate assimilation of knowledge of the agencies' practices, once they have been presented to the student. Class room teachers ordinarily are under no such illusions.

Measurement of the development of methods, skills and techniques also is possible. The student's verbatim interviews, analyzed by him as to content, method and results, spaced at intervals during the training period, will give a rough gauge of the development of better methods and the skills by which they were accomplished. A selected verbatim interview given to all students in elementary field training at the beginning and the end of a field experience is being used as an experiment at the University of Minnesota. This type of grading experiment, originally suggested by Grace Marcus, may be applied to the analysis of a case record, at the beginning and end of a field experience. While we have experimented with and without an outline as a basis for such an analysis, we now feel that the first analysis best reveals the student's attitudes and integrated knowledge when the student is unguided. We favor a detailed outline as a guide for the analysis at the end of the term, so that all the students in the various field centers can be comparatively graded.

The third aspect of field work is the crux of the problem. Assigning grades in a graduate school to the development of such a complex phenomenon as growth in personality is clearly impossible. In spite of this we

¹ Assistance in the preparation of these materials was furnished by the personnel of Work Projects Administration, Official Project No. 65-1-71-140, Sub-project No. 255, Social Case Work.

subscribe to Mr. Pray's statement that "the educational validity of field work is generally believed to depend upon its organization as something more than a mere period of 'practical' application of the 'theory' discussed in class. Most schools now regard it as an opportunity for individual education and personal development through which both practical and theoretical concepts are integrated for use in responsible professional practice."²

In trying to measure personality, Dr. Henry A. Murray of the Harvard Psychological Clinic points out that facts which should be observed in order to obtain a comprehensive view of a particular individual should include:

A. Such objective facts as

1. The changing conditions of the physical and social environment that are perceptible to the subject.
2. The changing psychological conditions in the subject's body.
3. The trends and action patterns (motor and verbal) of the subject. These may be imitations or responses.
4. The apparent gratifications (successes) and frustrations (failures) of the subject.

B. Such subjective facts as

Reports given by the subject of his perceptions, interpretations, feelings, emotions, intellects, fantasies, intentions and connotations.³

Clearly, few if any field supervisors are competent or have the laboratory facilities to observe any phase of personality on the basis of objective facts. On the subjective level we could devise instruments to measure attitudes relating to case work that, applied at the beginning and end of a field experience, would indicate growth in this small area. Even here an initial handicap to be overcome before such scales could be of value is that we would have to set up norms for desirable attitudes for case workers since none exist at present. We recognize that certain personality traits are desirable in a case worker. We may even go so far as to say that they may be developed, at least superficially, in the educational procedure. We do not believe, however, that they can be fairly considered as part of a student's grade in field work. His achievement may be rendered easy, difficult or impossible by the presence or absence of adverse personality traits, but more objective measures of his achievement than the presence or

absence of the traits themselves must be the basis of an academic grade.⁴ This is not to be interpreted as a reflection on any attempt to measure personality. Such objective measurements should be made and kept as part of the record which will eventually indicate a student's capacity as a potential case worker.

Another facet of the problem of field work grades is its lack of definition as to specific and uniform content. This is not an insoluble question. Curriculum committees of professional organizations and particularly the curriculum committee of the AASSW have given and are giving this problem intelligent consideration. The problem cannot be solved permanently, since case work is ever in a state of flux. This means that individual schools must continue to be interested in the question and responsible for its continued study and analysis.⁵ We have found a continuing staff seminar trying to coordinate class work and field work over a three year period our most successful mode of attack. The compiling of a field manual conforming to general principles but adapted to different agency settings is the current project of the seminar, and the discussions on its formulation are helping to define generic content. The greatest insurance of a formulated content consists in having as field supervisors qualified instructors on the teaching staff who give their full time to the conducting of a "training center" where the first field experience in case work is required.

The amount of field work credit a field experience should carry is also a perplexing question and one which needs experimental study. The method of having field credit adhere to the formula for class credit means that at the University of Minnesota each field credit is supposed to represent three hours of time in the field under supervision. This corresponds to one credit for each class hour which is supposed to involve two hours, study outside of class.

Until this year we have let the student's class schedule largely determine the amount of credit he would register for in his field work courses. The number of credits has been as little as two credits per quarter in

⁴ This principle is well expressed by the Committee on Evaluations of the Philadelphia Chapter, AASSW, in "Some Principles in the Evaluation Process." THE COMPASS, March, 1940, p. 3.

⁵ The New York School through its Cannon and Klein *Social Case Work. An Outline for Teaching*, and Lee and Kenworthy *Mental Hygiene and Social Case Work*; the Pennsylvania School through its recent publications on processes in social case work, particularly *Methods and Skill in Public Assistance*, and Miss Robinson's book on *Supervision*; the Chicago School of Social Administration in its *Field Work Manual* and Bristol and Moore, *Case Recording*, are some examples of the contribution of the individual schools touching on different points of the question of field work.

² Pray, Kenneth L. M. "Education for Social Work." *Social Work Year Book, 1939*, Russell Sage Foundation, p. 121.

³ Murray, Henry A. *Explorations in Personality*. Harvard Psychological Clinic. Oxford University Press, 1938, p. 12.

some advanced field placement to nine or ten credits per course per quarter. We have now decided that for the beginning generic field placement the course shall be a minimum of two quarters in a training center and shall carry a uniform number of credits. For instance, Social Work 153-154, Elementary Field Work, will carry five credits per quarter regardless of the time in excess of 150 hours per quarter, which is the minimum number of hours represented by the number of credits. At present we have no way of knowing whether the student who is registered for five credits but who has spent 180 hours in field work during the quarter has merely put in an extra thirty hours per quarter or whether the extra time represents more in actual content. The excess time might reflect the student's superiority as demonstrated by his interest or skill in case treatment, etc., or it might reflect his inferiority as compared with other students, as shown by his difficulty in keeping up in his dictation, in planning his work and in his case treatment. It might also represent variables in the student's personality, his relation to his superior or factors within the agency. These factors are subject to less variation and less effect on the student's grade where there is a supervisor who is a full time university instructor, whose assignment is the education of students in a field laboratory and who, by being responsible for from ten to twelve students, has a basis for comparison.

The number of credits a course should carry is conditioned by many factors and would have to be set by staff agreement. The number of credits is immaterial, however, beside the much more important question of whether Social Work 153 represents five credits of a fairly uniform content regardless of whether it be taken under Instructor A, Instructor B, or Instructor C; in Public Relief, in ADC, or in a private agency; or by a student carrying a program of seventeen hours in class and field courses, or one carrying a program of one class course and one field course.

It would be profitable to study the likenesses and differences of field training in such professions as medicine, law, teaching, nursing, home economics, child welfare and clinical psychology in its various uses, as compared to education for the social case worker. Comparisons cannot be made exactly because much of the clinical or field training involved in other fields is on an undergraduate basis. The problem of knowing what we are trying to measure in education through field practice is common to all, however, and should be given minute and critical study if we are to maintain our position that field practice has an educational content which can be transmitted. We believe that such intellectual content is afforded by the interpretation and analysis of the processes involved in case work, but that without such integration, vocational training in field practice rather than education in field practice is the result.

Plains States and Southwest Regional Conferences

The fourth annual Regional Conference of the Association's chapters and members in the Plains States will be held in Kansas City, September 21 and 22. Mrs. Ruth Gordon Yabroff, of Wichita, is chairman of the Conference, Norma Davidson of Kansas City is chairman of the Program Committee, and arrangements for the meeting will be worked out by a committee of the Kansas City Chapter.

Kansas, Colorado, Nebraska, Iowa, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Missouri are included in the original regional area, although this has not been sharply defined and the Conference will welcome members of other chapters, particularly state chapters in the West. Information on program and arrangements will soon be in the hands of each chapter chairman.

All Texas, Arkansas, and Oklahoma members of the Association are asked to take this notice as their invitation to attend the Southwest Regional Conference in Hot Springs, Arkansas, September 14 and 15. Mrs. Irene Farnham Conrad is Chairman of the Conference, but due to her illness, the later phases of the Conference preparation are being handled by Mrs. Rosebud Savage, Chairman of the Oklahoma Chapter. Headquarters will be at the Majestic Hotel, Hot Springs. Information on program and arrangements can be secured from chapter chairmen.

Report on 1940 Elections

The election of officers and Board members and Nominating Committee members, for which the polls closed July 15, resulted in the election of the following candidates:

PRESIDENT

Wayne McMillen

1ST VICE PRESIDENT

Pierce Atwater

2ND VICE PRESIDENT

Frank J. Bruno

3RD VICE PRESIDENT

Kenneth L. M. Pray

SECRETARY

Frank J. Hertel

TREASURER

James Brunot

NATIONAL BOARD MEMBERS AT LARGE

Mrs. Irene F. Conrad

Lester B. Granger

Sarah H. James

Margaret E. Rich

Mary Stanton

Elizabeth Wisner

NATIONAL BOARD MEMBERS

Dist. 1—Lillian J. Johnson

Dist. 2—Ruth E. Lewis

Dist. 3—Eleanor L. Hearon

Dist. 4—Louis E. Evans

Dist. 5—Aileen K. MacCracken

Dist. 6—Margaret Woll

Dist. 7—Ora Pendleton

Dist. 8—Donald S. Howard

Dist. 9—E. Marguerite Gane

NOMINATING COMMITTEE

Dist. 1—Anita Eldridge

Dist. 2—Beth Muller

Dist. 3—Helen Rowe

Dist. 4—Claudia Wannamaker

Dist. 5—Harold Silver

Dist. 6—Walter L. Stone

Dist. 7—Claire Thomas

Dist. 8—Margaret Wead

Dist. 9—Harry M. Carey

NON-CHAPTER DELEGATES

Louise Cuddy

Eleanor Ferris

Persis S. Holden

Chester V. Lewis

E. M. Sunley

Wayne Vasey

There were 3,658 votes cast, or 177 more than in 1939. The ballot contained 66

names, and included for the first time nominations made by districts for places on the National Board and Nominating Committee.

The ballots were counted under direction of a Committee of Tellers, consisting of Mary Ellen Hoffman, Chairman, Mary Ritzenhouse, and Benjamin Coleman. The Committee ordered a recount on three parts of the ballot in which the deciding majority was less than 50 votes. The recounts confirmed the original count.

A full tabulation of the votes by nominating districts has been sent to each candidate, and is on file in the National office.

National Inquiry in St. Louis

Ten of the professional staff members of the Family Service Society of St. Louis County, Missouri, petitioned the Association June 24 to have a study made of methods used by the Society Board and the Executive Secretary, Robert S. Wilson, in arriving at a plan of reorganization of the supervisory responsibility within the agency.

The petition went first to the St. Louis Chapter. The Chapter Executive Committee voted to request the national Association to conduct an immediate inquiry on the methods employed in adopting the plan of reorganization but not an evaluation of the plan itself. Walter West, Executive Secretary of the Association, is now making the study.

Copies of the report will be submitted to the Board of the Society, to Mr. Wilson, and to the members of the staff who were the original petitioners. No limitation is put on the use to which any of these reports may be put. Any use of the report by the Association would depend on action by the National Board or Executive Committee.

The social workers making the petition were Jean Berthold, Louise Draine, Marian Lindsay, Alice McCabe, Sol Newman, Patricia Sacks, Nellie Silverberg, Josephine Thompson, Pauline Tversky, Martha Tyler. These were all of the professional staff members of the agency except three who were on vacation.

Values and Limitations of the Evaluation Process

(Continued from page 7)

professional development. But the recording of the results in black and white fulfills additional purposes. It assures a degree of objectivity on the part of the supervisor because of the necessity for substantiating impressions with evidence. It assures that administrative decisions in regard to salary, promotion, etc., which are often made quite apart from the evaluation process, are related to a known and carefully formulated analysis of performance and not to a hurried, subjective judgment. Moreover, it assures that references for a new job or other uses made of the worker's personnel record are also based upon a fair statement of performance; this is especially important as a safeguard against changing supervisory staff.

From the worker's point of view, therefore, agencies have a clear obligation to their casework staff to provide for written evaluations of job performance.

What is the extent of that obligation in terms of frequency? Actual practice differs widely and the caseworker sees valid reasons for variation. He believes that agency function, size of staff and length of service may properly affect policy as to how frequently written evaluations are made. Although no specific recommendation comes from these discussion groups as to the interval between evaluations, it seems agreed that a desirable general policy calls for a written evaluation after the first six months, and annually thereafter with some flexibility in relation to a worker's stage of development and rate of progress. This, of course, assumes that additional evaluations may be made in relation to promotions, questions about performance, etc., upon the initiative of either supervisor or worker.

Whatever the interval, it is very important to the worker that *periodic* written evaluations be established in agency policy, and that the period covered be reasonably limited, as mentioned in reference to definition.

Of more importance to the worker than the length of time between evaluations is the fact that policy in regard to frequency be known and understood by the worker. The experience of suddenly being told to come to the next supervisory conference prepared for a critical discussion of your job performance is disconcerting. It creates unnecessary anxiety and may substantially limit the use a worker can make of the evaluation conference for his own professional development. If a worker does not know that periodic

written evaluations are established agency policy he may quite naturally think that he is being evaluated at a given point because of serious questions about his performance. It is reassuring to him to know that he is not being singled out as a problem but is participating in an established personnel practice.

It is not only in relation to the frequency aspect of evaluation policy that advance knowledge on the worker's part is important. A worker may be told at the time of employment that he will be evaluated after the first six months and once a year thereafter. He may not know who is responsible for evaluating him, what the purpose is, how much participation will be expected of him, or what factors will be covered. If these points remain mysterious, as much or more thwarting anxiety can be built up as when the evaluation comes as a total surprise.

It is probable that today few agencies make it a point to see that new staff members early in their employment understand exactly what the agency's policy is in regard to evaluation. Caseworkers would like to see the importance of this recognized. They can and have in some instances taken the initiative in finding out why the agency evaluates them periodically, what the content of the evaluation is to be, what use will be made of it beyond themselves and the supervisor, and how the process will be carried out. But this should not be entirely the worker's responsibility. Where all these points have become part of established agency policy the worker has a right to know them. Probably in many instances the reasons workers have not understood, or have misunderstood, agency evaluation policy is due to a lack of clarity on the part of the agency administration itself as to purposes, content and method.

If periodic written evaluations are made an established part of agency policy and are fully understood by staff, at what time does the caseworker think such evaluations should be made? In some agencies annual evaluations are based on date of employment. In others all evaluations of staff are made at the same time of year. From the worker's viewpoint the first policy seems to be preferred for several reasons although no very strong opinion is expressed on this phase of evaluation method. If the annual interval is directly related to the time the worker came to the agency, the primary focus becomes professional development. Although he knows that the appraisal of his performance will be used administratively for decisions as to advancement this takes on less emphasis than it does when the whole staff is evaluated at the same time. It also removes a possible element of competitiveness. In

instances where simultaneous evaluation of all staff occurs close to the time of agency budget-making, there may be a tendency for the worker to think more of the administrative uses to which his evaluation may be put than if it were done at another time of year, with a resultant lessening of the developmental uses he makes of it; or the worker may feel that administrative considerations are primary in the supervisor's mind; also in the worker's eyes, the pressure upon a supervisor who is required to evaluate everyone within a given period may limit the amount and quality of attention that can be given to any one person's evaluation.

For these reasons the caseworker who looks upon evaluation primarily as a tool in professional development seems to prefer that each worker be evaluated in relation to when he came to the agency, rather than at one fixed time of year.

ALL the references I have made to evaluation as a constructive, dynamic process in the development of professional skill are evidence of a conviction that such is its purpose and value. For emphasis I have left until last the most essential single component, in the opinion of the caseworker, in the evaluation process. Whether evaluation is written, whether it is periodic, whether it is understood in advance or when it is made, are relatively minor considerations in comparison with this point to which all three groups give emphasis: participation on the part of the worker.

No one factor so influences the values for the worker's professional development as the kind and degree of sharing that takes place. Without any participation on the worker's part evaluation is bound to have authoritative connotations and to arouse negative feelings if only because he has not had an opportunity to take part in a process in which he considers his stake great. This negative reaction may occur even when all of the factors previously mentioned are provided for.

Various types of worker participation are possible, and varying degrees of participation are provided in actual practice. Since the values of an evaluation are considered directly proportional to the kind and extent of participation, the worker's concept of the steps involved in adequate participation is important. It is assumed, of course, that the evaluation process outlined here is based upon a good supervisory relationship and that supervision has included continuous discussion of strengths and weaknesses as they have appeared from day to day.

The first part of the evaluation should consist of an informal preliminary oral discussion between worker and supervisor of those factors in job performance which will be covered in the evaluation. It is not thought important whether the worker has a written outline to follow or even whether the agency uses a formal written form. The conference should serve to review strengths and weaknesses which have been indicated earlier in the supervisory process and should give the worker an opportunity to point out the areas in which he feels the need of further supervisory help. It should represent a real seeking on the part of both participants for an objective analysis of work performed, including the supervisor's contribution to the caseworker's development, and for future direction on the part of both.

In putting the results of such discussion into writing, the supervisor will draw on the worker's thinking as it developed in the conference as well as her own. But since the evaluation is in fact the supervisor's evaluation of the worker, it is important that the worker be given an opportunity to discuss it again after it is written. This, of course, raises the perennial question of whether a worker should read his evaluation in its final written form. Caseworkers do not agree on this point. Some think that reading the evaluation is the logical final step in full participation and that it should always be part of the process. Others consider that the greatest value to the worker lies in the oral discussion and that therefore reading of the written statement is an unimportant step. There is unqualified agreement, however, that (1) the content of the evaluation in its final form should be discussed fully with the worker and (2) the worker should be free to read the evaluation if he wishes without any sense of inappropriateness in so doing.

IN summary, caseworkers believe "that evaluations cannot have dynamic value unless the philosophy of agency, supervisor and worker is based on the concept which recognizes evaluation as a process unifying, mutually participating and jointly beneficial." Their specific recommendations to these ends are:

Agencies should provide periodic written evaluations for caseworkers. Workers should know early in their employment what the agency's evaluation practices are in relation to purpose, use, content and method. Above all, there should be provision for genuine participation on the part of the worker in the evaluation process.